

FIRE PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

(Competitive Class)

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS

This class encompasses a highly responsible administrative position, the primary duties of which include serving as the department representative to the media and assisting in developing and implementing an effective public relations program. The Fire Public Information Officer gives talks, lectures, and demonstrations to the public and to private organizations, and coordinates with and contributes to the department's public fire education programs. The employee of this class recommends programs and projects which will enhance the professional image of the department. The employee of this class works with little supervision, reporting to and having work reviewed by the Fire Chief.

EXAMPLES OF WORK

Examples listed below are illustrative only. They are not intended to include all duties which may be assigned, neither are they intended to exclude other duties which may be logical assignments to this class.

Plans, organizes, and directs the public relations program for the fire department to create and maintain a favorable public image of the fire department. Heightens public awareness about fire department operations and informs the public of the necessity and methods of civilian cooperation in the fire department work by means of talks, demonstrations, or distributions of literature to schools, civic groups, businesses, or any other concerned citizen. Arranges for public relations efforts in order to meet needs, objectives, and policies of the fire department. Participates in the department's fire public education program.

Plans and directs the development and communication of information designed to inform the public of department programs, accomplishments, and official position. Purchases advertising time and space needed and arranges for time and space for public service announcements. Maintains the fire department's website ensuring all information is current and up-to-date. Monitors local media to assess public perception of the department and reports to fire department administration. Organizes fire department participation in fund raising activities.

Receives correspondence addressed to the fire department and determines appropriate response. Responds to requests for

information or to handle problems. Answers inquiries or handles complaints from the public about the operation of the fire department. Writes new releases, new articles, narrative reports, or other official position papers of the department. Writes reports and completes records and forms as needed to document the work of the division. Develops and maintains an internal communication newsletter.

Participates in research and planning of programs and activities for the fire department. Conducts polls and surveys related to fire department services. Organizes and analyzes data gathered through polls and surveys in order to recommend changes in department operations. Recommends goals and objectives for the public relations program.

Responds to fires and major incidents in order to perform public information support functions. Ensures that the public and the media are a safe distance from emergency operations at the scene. Acts as department representative to the news media, releasing information and answering questions concerning department operations. Gives on-camera interviews at the scene to provide accurate and timely information to the public.

Works with boards, agencies, and other groups whose rules and operations affect the careers of fire department personnel or the work of the fire department. Attends conferences and workshops to keep informed and obtain ideas and knowledge on the functions of public information. Works with other public service agencies on projects of mutual concern to both the agency and the fire department to coordinate information for release in multi-agency responses.

Reviews existing or proposed legislation, researches implications of such legislation, and formulates position statements for consideration by the Fire Chief. Studies new laws, regulations, ordinances, and court rulings relating to fire department operations to determine if changes in department policies and procedures are needed.

Meets with sales representatives to review products and make decisions on purchasing for the public relations and education programs. Purchases fire safety materials for distribution to the public keeping such purchases within the established budget. Maintains an inventory of fire safety materials, supplies, and equipment received by the fire department.

Performs any related duties assigned.

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Unless otherwise specified, all requirements listed below must be met by filing deadline for application for admission to the examination.

Must meet all requirements of the Municipal Fire and Police Civil Service Law, including being a citizen of the United States and of legal age.

After offer of employment, but before beginning work in this class, must pass a medical examination and fitness evaluation prepared and administered by the Appointing Authority, designed to demonstrate good health and physical fitness sufficient to perform the essential duties of the position, with or without accommodation.

Must possess a valid driver's license.

Must present documentation indicating, at a minimum, that the applicant has met the minimum high school graduation requirements necessary to receive a high school diploma as established by the state of Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. Such documentation shall include at least one of the following: high school diploma, high school transcript, certificate of equivalency, affidavit from the issuing high school, college diploma, or college transcript, any one of which must indicate that graduation has occurred or a degree awarded. A certification of completion shall not be sufficient to substitute for certification of graduation.

AND MUST HAVE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING

Must have at least five (5) years of full-time experience in fire suppression, training, or fire prevention with a paid fire department.

OR

Must have at least three (3) years of full-time experience in communications, marketing, community relations, or public relations.

Prior to confirmation in the class of Fire Public Information Officer, must have obtained certifications as Firefighter I, Firefighter II, Hazardous Materials - Awareness, and Hazardous Materials - Operations, according to National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standards.

Effective January 1, 2010, must have an associate degree in fire science or a related communications curriculum.